



THE EDWARD BRUCE
MEMORIAL COLLECTION

SEPTEMBER 12 TO 28, 1943

THE CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART
WASHINGTON, D. C.



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INTRODUCTION

I

EDWARD BRUCE

IT IS MY belief that the work of Edward Bruce as Chief of The Public Works of Art Project, The Section of Painting and Sculpture and The Section of Fine Arts, successively, will not only go down in American history, but has already become an inseparable part of the processes of our cultivation. I did not foresee this when Bruce appointed me Technical Director of The Public Works of Art Project on December 8th, 1933. But from that day until his death—through the years of his staggering energy and through the period of his illness which he fought with undiminishing courage—I could watch Bruce inspire the special group of workers which he gathered about him, with the zeal of his own belief that art and democracy are not only compatible but vital to each other. He believed that without the infusion of the blood of art the body of democracy cannot enjoy full health. With this faith, from which he did not once waver, he employed, to assist him in its realization, Edward Rowan, Olin Dows, Inslee Hopper, Maria Ealand and myself. For a decade we devoted ourselves to the ideal to which he was devoted.

This capacity to inspire devotion and to unify the efforts of markedly different personalities in the development of a single aim was a natural result of the special powers that made up the character of Edward Bruce. He had a divine blindness to obstacles. Even when he did see them he did not acknowledge their presence, at least not to the extent of admitting that they could hold up his progress. In his youth he was a great football guard. And throughout his life he loved to break through the line.

The opposition was composed of the same elements which always oppose the new idea. In part it was made up of those who had been specially favored by the older conditions to which the new idea was opposed, in part by those who except from their vague notions of democracy art because they believe it to be a luxury exclusively possessed by an imaginary social aristocracy, and in part by those who see a danger signal in any new idea whatever the field of endeavor to which it belongs.

Bruce did not blindly throw his weight against the opposing line of conventionalists. He did two things. He built on a basis of impartiality. In directing The Section of Fine Arts which commissioned painters and sculptors to execute murals

and sculpture for Federal buildings, he employed a system of open anonymous competitions, and placed each competition in the hands of experienced painters and sculptors who were not members of his Section of Fine Arts. What system could be more democratic? The work of each artist entering a competition was judged solely on the basis of its quality. No name was attached to it so that mere name did not win, and lack of fame did not defeat. Such was the solid rock of fairness on which Bruce built.

The other thing he did was to build on a broad basis. He did not narrow himself to the taste of his own colleagues, or to the taste of a single school of artists. He kept reaching out, drawing into Section conferences men and women in different walks of life and with different esthetic conceptions. His every move was toward the realization of his ideal of democracy. Believing as he did, with religious fervor, that it was inherent in the democratic ideal to stimulate the creative forces of art so that men and women of talent should find ample opportunities to reach their peaks, he wanted the enriching forces of art to be carried to every part of our country. He was convinced that in no other way could the sparks of talent and appreciation be sure of the ignition which warms and fructifies democracy.

He went far in carrying out this ambition, for under him the Section placed murals and sculptures in Federal buildings in 1205 different towns and cities. Some of the larger cities naturally had more than one Federal building which called for decoration. Consequently in the 1205 different communities 1371 works were installed. Of these 1091 are murals and 287 are sculptures.

Edward Bruce was the son of a minister and a student of the Bible. There was a Biblical element in his concept of democracy. It actually pained him to perceive that not everyone responds to art. He dreamed, I think, of a democracy in which everyone loved art, particularly painting, the art in which he himself was gifted. He did not dream of a world which liked only his paintings. Not at all. In his last years he sacrificed his own art to devote all his time to the Section for the benefit of his fellow artists. Hence the Bruce Memorial Collection, the spontaneous response to his devotion to the artists who have given it.

If Bruce unwillingly acknowledged that even superior people may lack the capacity for visual enjoyment which art demands, he still held to the conviction that this capacity exists in people in every different circle of our social structure. On the plains

and prairies, in the slums, on the Main Streets and Park Avenues there were those who seemed to be born with a latent power which only needed art for its development. To them Bruce wanted to bring art, the art which expressed the life of which they were a part.

At one time or another every citizen, young or old, goes to the post office. Should he see nothing but counters, mail boxes and a bulletin board telling who is wanted for murder or burglary? Or should he find that his government believed that in the course of their daily lives it would refresh people to see what the artists were doing? Some would not notice mural or sculpture or both. Some would glance and forget. Some would even object. Some would enjoy. Some would receive the first spark of enlightenment. Whatever the response, art was brought to the people by simple and natural means.

I have no doubt that many a future artist will say: "You know, the first painting I ever saw was a mural in the little post office at home." The opportunity to see is the first step. The opportunity to do brings fulfillment. Bruce inspired a democracy to offer these opportunities to its artists without favor or partiality. He got to the hearts of his own ideal of democratic civilization.

Edward Bruce was born in Dover Plain, New York, April 13th, 1879. He began painting landscape at the age of fourteen. He did not decide to make it his profession until years later after he won success in the law and in business. In 1901 he graduated from Columbia with the degree of A.B. and in 1904 he graduated from the Columbia Law School with the degree of L.L.B. He practiced law in New York and later in Manila, and then went into foreign trade in the Far East. At that time he made a collection of Chinese paintings which is now in the Fogg Museum of Art.

But painting still called him. He gave up his law business in which he had been so successful, took a studio in Italy where he could work without interruption, and put himself through a vigorous apprenticeship of six years. He returned to America, held an exhibition in New York and in a surprisingly short time won national recognition. Since then he has contributed to all the important exhibitions and won many honors.

In 1937 he was awarded the Columbia University Medal for Excellence. In 1938 Harvard University conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Arts; in the same year he was awarded the Friedsam Fellowship Gold Medal and in 1940 President Roosevelt appointed him a member of the Commission of Fine Arts.

He entered the Treasury Department in 1933 to organize the Public Works of Art Project. This led to his developing the Section of Painting and Sculpture, which later became the Section of Fine Arts. To this work which was nation-wide in scope Edward Bruce gave himself with such intensity and single-mindedness that his health was broken. But with amazing courage he continued to drive forward up to the very last.

II.

THE EDWARD BRUCE MEMORIAL COLLECTION

Every art collection tells the story of its birth. Was it born of pride or love, ignorance or understanding, diligence or enjoyment, courage or timidity? As an entity, aside from its component parts, it has a character derived from the motivating forces of its origin. In the case of the unique Edward Bruce Memorial Collection the sources of its being are clearly written on its face. It sprang to life as a tribute of affection and understanding from the artists of whose works it is composed, to a fellow artist who, as administrator of the United States Section of Fine Arts has left a permanent imprint upon American civilization. Edward Bruce never saw the collection which the artists have presented to the Hollywood, Florida Hospital where he died, as a fitting tribute to a man whose place in the history of American art is important and permanent.

I have said that Edward Bruce never saw this collection. Strictly speaking this is true. He never knew that his fellow artists, painters and sculptors, would turn thus to honor him. He did know every artist who has given his work to the collection. Some of the actual pictures he had seen and liked, and all of them, could he have seen them together, he would instantly have recognized, for he knew intimately the work of every artist represented in this unique gathering of pictures. Probably no one in America knew personally so many artists. For ten years the creative forces of American art were stimulated by the tremendous force that was Edward Bruce.

And of course these other artists knew him. They knew the broad and healthy range of his tastes, which always rejected whatever in art was artificial, false or unhealthy. They knew that while as an administrator he was responsible for a renaissance in mural painting and the opening of fresh channels to American sculptors, Bruce, as an artist-collector, had a special love for

the unpretentious and the intimate. In this he was not unlike other artist-collectors. When painters and sculptors collect they do not go in search of show works. They are not misled by sounding names. They do not feel the need of filling gaps.

Theirs is a less formal, a more intimate quest. The artist's collection compares with the typical public collection a little as language spoken in the intimacy of the family compares with public speech. In a sense it is less complete and more revealing. It is communication from the knowing to the knowing. And this is the character of the collection which the artists have assembled in memory of Edward Bruce. The majority of these artists are represented in the great museums throughout the country but none of them would think of failing to respect the family quality of an artist collection. That is why the Bruce Memorial Collection is informal, friendly, off-guard and enjoyably illuminating.

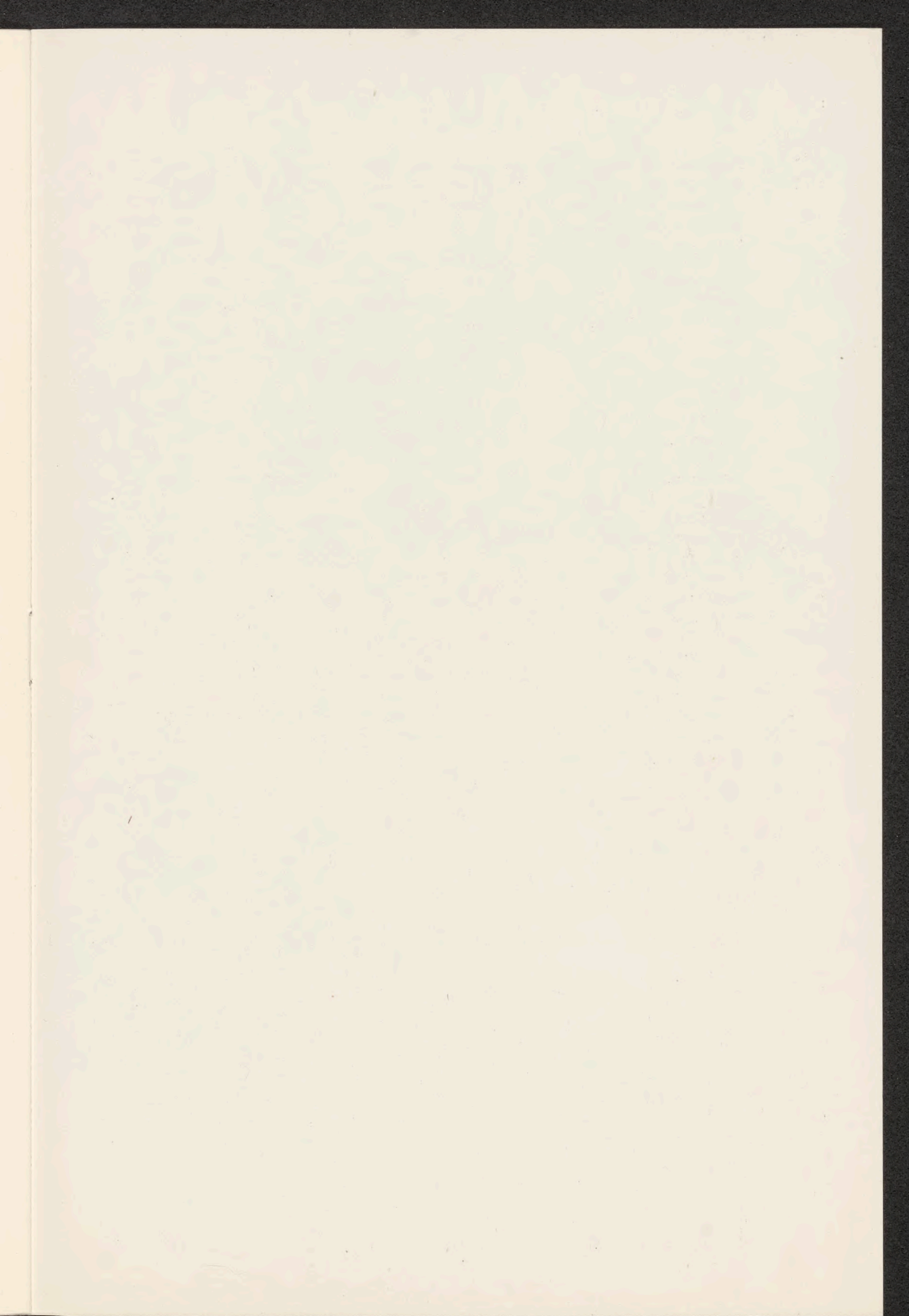
FORBES WATSON.

THE EDWARD BRUCE MEMORIAL COLLECTION

Appel, Marianne	Happy Family, Alaska	Gouache
Arnautoff, Victor	Hill Street	Water Color
Beal, Gifford	Sketching	Water Color
Bennett, Rainey	Among The Pines	Water Color
Bernstein, Henry	The Defenders	Tempera
Biddle, George	Grand Central Station	Water Color
Blanch, Arnold	Storm in Colorado	Lithograph
Blanch, Lucille	Farm in Pennsylvania	Water Color
Bouche, Louis	In The Woods	Drawing
Britton, Edgar	Yellow Valley	Water Color
Brooks, James		Lithograph
Burkhard, Verona	Near Powder River Pass	Water Color
Calfee, William	Picnic	Oil
Carroll, John	Connecticut Hills	Water Color
Chamberlain, Norman	Venetian Waters	Water Color
Cook, Howard	Blue Mountain	Water Color
Covey, Arthur	Bayou Teche	Water Color
Crimi, Alfred	Nature's Gift	Water Color
Curry, John Steuart	Western Landscape	Water Color
Dalstrom, Gustaf	Goats	Gouache
Davis, Lew	Little Dogie	Water Color
Dinneen, Alice	Begonia	Water Color
Dohanos, Stevan	Railroad Crossing	Water Color
Dornbush, Adrian	Hills of Illinois	Gouache
Dows, Olin	Autumn Landscape	Water Color
Driggs, Elsie	Children's Picnic	Water Color
Edie, Stuart	Autumn in Woodstock	Gouache
Farr, Dorothy	Mountain Quail	Gouache
Farr, Fred	Two Owls	Gouache
Fiene, Ernest	Brittany Coast	Water Color
Fogel, Seymour	Young Girl Resting	Water Color
Folinsbee, John	Jericho Valley	Lithograph
Foster, Gerald	Sails	Water Color
Foy, Frances	Plant Pattern	Water Color
Friedenthal, David	Mountain Village in Winter	Water Color
Gates, Margaret	Virgin Islands	Water Color
Gates, Robert	End of Summer	Water Color
Gernand, John	Boy With Net	Oil on Paper
Goff, Lloyd	Navajo Country	Water Color
Gonzalez, Xavier	Peonies	Water Color
Good, Minnetta	Landscape Memories	Lithograph
Gropper, William	Cowboy	Water Color
Gross, Chaim	Acrobats	Drawing
	Village	Water Color
Grotenrath, Ruth	Winter Landscape	Gouache
Haines, Richard	The Bypass	Gouache
Higgins, Eugene	Solitude	Water Color
Hurd, Peter	The Bunk House	Lithograph

Ipcar, Dahlov	Cow Under Apple Tree	Water Color
Jamieson, Mitchell	Chicken Family	Water Color
Johnson, Avery	Under Tropic Trees	Water Color
Jones, Amy	Sunflowers and Cabin	Water Color
Jones, Wendell	Swimmers	Water Color
Kaeselau, Charles	Steam Train	Tempera
Kagy, Sheffield	Bathers	Water Color
Kingman, Eugene	Sunset Shadows	Woodblock
Klittgaard, Georgina	Top of the Peak	Lithograph
Kroll, Leon	Flowers in the Front Yard	Water Color
LaCagnina, Henry	Vermont Landscape	Oil
Lazzari, Pietro	Tomarino Wood Yard	Water Color
Lea, Tom	Jerry's Bouquet	Gouache
Lee, Doris	Comanche Indian	Water Color
Lehman, Harold	Cornfield	Lithograph
Lewendowski, Edmund	Kitten	Drawing
Lichtner, Schomer	Menomee River	Water Color
Lochrie, Elizabeth	Winter	Gouache
Lockwood, Ward	The Lake	Water Color
Lopez, Carlos	Red Country	Water Color
McAfee, Ila	Dark Grove	Water Color
McCosh, David	Horses on the Range	Water Color
McCreery, James	Western Sea and Sky	Water Color
	Pigeons and Fuchsia	Colored Print
	Rooster and Columbine	Colored Print
McLeary, Kindred	Green Bananas	Water Color
Magafan, Ethel	Winter in the Mountains	Water Color
Maldarelli, Oronzio	Sleeping Tom	Water Color
Mangravite, Peppino	Corn and Goldenrod	Lithograph
	Summer Vacation	Lithograph
Maril, Herman	Man and Horse	Gouache
Mayer, Henrik Martin	Rising Moon	Water Color
Mayer, Jessie Hull	Turk's Cap Lilies	Water Color
Mechau, Frank	Horse and Colt	Drawing
Mecklem, Austin	Spring Garden	Gouache
Nura	Dream and the Dreamer	Lithograph
Oberteuffer, Karl	Bicycles	Water Color
Osgood, James W.	Still Life	Oil
Palmer, William	Summer Holiday	Water Color
Peirce, Waldo	Mountain Stream	Water Color
Phillips, Marjorie	Flowers in Studio	Colored Print
Picken, George	In the Park	Water Color
Poor, Anne	Green Valley	Water Color
Poor, Henry Varnum		Water Color
Refregier, Anton	Woodstock Barn	Water Color
Reindel, Edna	Ocean Shore, Martha's Vineyard	Water Color
Robinson, Boardman	Hill and Cloud	Wash Drawing
Rohland, Caroline	Little Girl with Flowers	Pastel
Rohland, Paul	Dahlias	Water Color
Rosen, Charles	Flowers	Drawing

Rosenfeld, Edward	Feeding the Chickens	Gouache
Rotier, Peter	Hill Country	Water Color
Rubenstein, Lewis	At the Corner	Water Color
Ruellan, Andree	The Duet	Lithograph
Samerjan, George	Evening in Texas	Water Color
	Little Stream, Crosswicks, N. J.	Water Color
Sample, Paul	New Hampshire Meadows	Water Color
Sandzen, Birger	Mountain Settlement	Water Color
Scaravaglione, Concetta	Nude	Drawing
Schmid, Elsa	Geranium	Pastel
Schnakenberg, Henry	Houseboats, Caloosahatchie River	Water Color
Sepeshy, Zoltan	Beach, Lake Michigan	Oil
Siporin, Mitchell	Mariachi 1940	Gouache
Sopher, Aaron	Boys Swimming	Water Color
Spears, Ethel	Farm in Autumn	Water Color
Stackpole, Ralph	Artist Sketching	Drawing
Sterne, Maurice	Peperoni	Oil
Stone, Agnes	Returning Gulls	Water Color
Terrell, Elizabeth	Cabbage and Fruit	Gouache
Thwaites, Charles	Circus	Oil on Paper
Ulreich, Buk	Fantasy	Gouache
Vander Sluis, George	Western Ranch	Oil Tempera
Von Saltza, Philip	Catching Alewives in the Parker River	Water Color
Vorst, Joseph	Missouri Winter	Gouache
Watson, Jean	Stormy Sea	Oil
Watson, Nan	Chrysanthemums and Fruit	Oil
Wiley, Lucia	Mountains	Silk Screen Print
	Mountain Lake	Silk Screen Print
Winter, Andrew	New England Winter	Water Color
Woeltz, Julius	Ed's Place	Gouache
Wood, Stanley	In the Harbor	Water Color
Zorach, Marguerite	Approaching Storm	Water Color
Zorach, William	Robinhood Cove, Maine	Water Color



THE
HISTORY
OF
THE
CITY
OF
NEW
YORK
FROM
THE
FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO
THE
PRESENT
TIME
BY
JOHN
B. HOGAN
AND
JOHN
W. HOGAN
NEW
YORK
1898